

Investment Weekly

14 February 2025 For Professional Clients only.

Chart of the week – China's household wealth exposure to property



It's been a good start to the year for investors in China's stock market. The MSCI China index is already up over 9%, outperforming the wider EM index and the US. This follows on from a very good performance in 2024 as Chinese authorities' ramp up of policy support helped reverse a prolonged period of weak sentiment.

A big driver of recent gains has been a rally in China's tech companies. The unveiling of DeepSeek late last month has triggered a reappraisal of the sector's profits outlook and potential feedthrough to Al innovation and adoption in the country's vast consumer market. Also, data on Lunar New Year spending has been strong, and is reflected in a higher-than-expected January CPI print.

We think China equities remain well positioned to do well in 2025. Deep discounts versus global peers imply potential for large upside moves on better-than-expected news. After DeepSeek, there is potential for accelerated Al adoption across many industries. And last year's late rally in the US dollar and big pick-up in global yields looks to have run out of steam, boding well for the overall EM asset complex.

Nevertheless, with a big chunk of China's household wealth tied up in property, the real estate slump remains a major challenge, and with it the threat of sustained deflation. Recent policy measures have helped stabilise the situation, but more demand-boosting stimulus will be required to keep growth on the right track and maintain positive momentum in markets. All eyes will be on next month's National People's Congress (NPC) meeting.

Market Spotlight

Asia credit outlook

Elevated all-in yields and tighter spreads helped deliver a strong performance in <u>Asian credit</u> last year. And despite a recent pick-up in global policy uncertainty, macro tailwinds could make 2025 another strong year for the asset class. Asian markets benefit from the twin-drivers of relatively high GDP growth and benign inflation. But there are other key themes, too. One is China's continuing path to recovery. Its outlook hinges on navigating external headwinds and domestic imbalances with policies to boost domestic demand and cut industrial over-capacity. A clear progrowth, pro-market policy stance could help – and we're expecting more details on policy support in March. That ongoing stimulus could have spillover effects for the rest of Asia and provide a cushion from global headwinds.

Meanwhile, the region's credit market also benefits from the strong growth, rising trade flows, and insulated nature of domestically oriented economies like India and parts of ASEAN, including Indonesia and the Philippines. These economies are less sensitive to global trade, making them potentially more resilient to external shocks.

Overall, an encouraging macro backdrop, Western growth concerns, diversification upside, and good relative performance in 2024 bode well for revived interest in Asia fixed income.

The value of investments and any income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. Past performance does not predict future returns. For informational purposes only and should not be construed as a recommendation to invest in the specific country, product, strategy, sector, or security. Any views expressed were held at the time of preparation and are subject to change without notice. Any forecast, projection or target where provided is indicative only and is not guaranteed in any way. HSBC Asset Management accepts no liability for any failure to meet such forecast, projection, or target. Diversification does not ensure a profit or protect against loss. Source: HSBC Asset Management. Macrobond, Bloomberg, Goldman Sachs. Data as at 7.30am UK time 14 February 2025.



Inflation Pick-up \rightarrow

What this week's US CPI data means for the Fed

Frontier Markets \rightarrow

The growth prospects for frontier economies

Mexico Outlook →

Exploring the outlook for Mexican markets

Read our latest views: Asian economies and credit market outlook



CPI surprise

US core CPI surprised to the upside, rising by 0.4% month-on-month in January. Some of the strength reflected outsized gains in some components – used car prices jumped 2.2% mom, vehicle insurance rose by 2.0% mom and airfares were up 1.2%. Strong demand for new and used cars in recent months – potentially in anticipation of tariffs – may be supporting prices and insurance premiums. Airfares look more like a case of a bit of noise in the data, what some economists have called 'residual seasonality'. Absent these factors, core CPI would have risen by a more palatable, albeit still robust, 0.3% mom.

Luckily for the Fed, it targets PCE. The CPI data, when combined with the produce price release, has led economists to conclude core PCE is likely to have risen by 0.2-0.3% mom in January, following prints of only 0.1-0.2% in the previous two months. In that sense, while the Fed won't be overly happy with the January inflation data, it will also want to see whether it follows the same pattern as recent years – a strong start that fades away. The bond market, having initially sold off in reaction to the CPI, has calmed down and largely reversed its losses.

Africa as a growth leader

A key attraction of frontier markets is portfolio exposure to smaller, rapidly-growing economies. According to the IMF, the average GDP growth rate for frontier economies is 4% over the next five years, well above 2.2% for the US, and 1.2% for the big-four eurozone economies.

Vietnam – a big weight in the frontier index – has a well-documented structural growth story centred on attracting FDI amid the recent trend of global "friendshoring". Bangladesh has become a key textiles exporter. But perhaps less talked about is the impressive growth now being seen in many West African nations, with Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Benin expected to grow in excess of 6% per annum over the next five years.

A big part of this growth will be driven by recent hydrocarbon development, which brings with it dependence on global energy prices. And regional politics remain difficult. Nonetheless these growth numbers signal a region with growing economic clout – supported by a young and growing population – and with it an emerging consumer base. As these economies mature, investor allocations and market liquidity are likely to increase.

Mexican market resilience

Mexico has found itself at the centre of a rise in global policy uncertainty recently – but its markets have shown resilience.

After regional political discussions in early February, volatility in the peso subsided, and the currency rebounded. That upbeat reaction spilled into the stock market, where equities saw a pick-up, and in sovereign bonds, where there was a modest fall in both two- and 10-year yields.

However, volatility and investment uncertainty are expected to continue. In FX, the peso has room to depreciate to buffer any shock in terms of trade, and if so, financial authorities may intervene to secure orderly trading conditions without targeting any specific FX level. But peso weakness could pose upside risks to inflation and downside risks to economic activity. These factors are likely to shape policy direction from Mexico's central bank. Our base case view is that while Banxico is ready to decouple slightly from the Fed and cut rates by ~150bps this year, the uncertain outlook could frustrate efforts. For investors, **our Mexico analysts continue to anticipate a steepening of the Mexican yield curve – with value in short-term tenors, as well as tactical opportunities in longer-term tenors given the uncertain backdrop**.







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Asset class views

Our baseline macro scenario is for a soft-ish landing, characterised by growth falling below trend and inflation returning to target. But the data flow is likely to remain bumpy and the outlook remains uncertain. Risk asset valuations are stretched in many areas. That means that any deterioration in corporate fundamentals could create market volatility. A defensive positioning in portfolios remains appropriate, which includes selective exposures to fixed income, risk assets, and private markets.

House view represents a 12-month investment view across major asset classes in our portfolios.



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This week

Date	Country	Indicator	Data as of	Actual	Prior	Comment
Sun. 09 February	CN	СРІ (уоу)	Jan	0.5%	0.1%	The timing of the LNY holiday contributed to the pick-up in January's CPI. Core inflation also edged up
Tue. 11 February	US	NFIB Index of Small Business Optimism	Jan	102.8	105.1	The index retraced, after surging in Q4 2024 amid post-election optimism, but remains above its long-term average
	US	Fed Chair Powell testimony at Senate Banking Committee				Powell reiterated the Fed was in "no hurry" to cut rates due to the strong US economy and noted r* has "risen meaningfully"
Wed. 12 February	US	СРІ (уоу)	Jan	3.0%	2.9%	US headline and core CPI surprised on the upside, boosted by strong used car prices and one-off items amid new year price rises
	IN	Industrial Production (yoy)	Dec	3.2%	5.0%	Despite slower growth in industrial production, the output of infrastructure and construction goods was robust in Q424
	IN	СРІ (уоу)	Jan	4.3%	5.2%	Moderating food price pressures continued to drive down headline inflation, bringing it closer to the RBI's 4% target
Thu. 13 February	US	PPI (mom)	Jan	0.4%	0.5%	Producer prices rose by slightly more than expected, in part reflecting energy price developments
	UK	GDP, Prelim (qoq)	Q4	0.1%	0.0%	GDP eked out a slight increase in Q424. Consumer spending stagnated and business investment fell sharply
	PH	Central Bank Policy Rate	Feb	5.75%	5.75%	The BSP surprisingly left policy on hold amid rising global policy uncertainty, but still expects to ease gradually during 2025
Fri. 14 February	US	Retail Sales (mom)	Jan	-	0.4%	Retail sales have been robust of late. Consumers may be bringing forward spending ahead of possible tariff-induced price rises
	US	Industrial Production (mom)	Jan	-	0.9%	Industrial production could rise further in early 2025, as firms boost output ahead of the potential imposition of trade tariffs

CN - China, US - United States, IN - India, UK - United Kingdom, PH - Philippines

The week ahead

Date	Country	Indicator	Data as of	Survey	Prior	Comment
Sun. 16 February	JP	GDP (qoq)	Q4	0.3%	0.3%	Modest growth should persist in Q424, but a renewed decline in household consumption is likely
Mon. 17 February	US	Earnings	Q4			70% of S&P500 have reported Q4 results, with 40% in Europe. US net beats in line with history, better than expected in Europe
Tue. 18 February	AU	RBA Cash Target Rate	Feb	4.10%	4.35%	A downside surprise in Q4 CPI should prompt the RBA to commence an easing cycle, lowering rates 25bp
	UK	Unemployment Rate, ILO	Dec	4.6%	4.4%	Labour market conditions are cooling with PAYE employment declining. Wage growth remains stubbornly high
Wed. 19 February	ID	Bank Indonesia Rate	Feb	5.75%	5.75%	BI may keep policy on hold due to the weaker IDR, but growth concerns point to further gradual easing later in 2025
	UK	СРІ (уоу)	Jan	2.7%	2.5%	Higher oil prices and a weaker GBP should boost headline inflation in the near-term. Services inflation is slowing gradually
	NZ	RBNZ Official Cash Rate	Feb	3.75%	4.25%	Continued spare capacity and CPI inflation remaining within its target band point to another 50bp rate cut
Thu. 20 February	JP	СРІ (уоу)	Jan	4.0%	3.6%	Fresh food prices should lift headline inflation. Core measures are expected to edge up slightly
Fri. 21 February	US	S&P Global Composite PMI (Flash)	Feb	-	52.7	Whilst output growth slowed and price pressures rose in January, optimism about the next 12 months remains elevated
	EZ	S&P Global Composite PMI (Flash)	Feb	-	50.2	January's positive PMI hints at a slight improvement in early 2025. Intra-zone country differences remain wide
	UK	S&P Global Composite PMI (Flash)	Feb	-	50.6	Weak business optimism and employment, alongside rising price expectations, have reignited UK stagflationary fears
	IN	S&P Global Composite PMI (Flash)	Feb	-	57.7	The composite PMI has remained robust in early 2025, buoyed by manufacturing sentiment. Services show signs of cooling

JP - Japan, US - United States, AU - Australia, ID - Indonesia, UK - United Kingdom, NZ - New Zealand, EZ - Eurozone, IN - India

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This week

Global policy uncertainty continued to overhang risk markets, with the US DXY dollar index weakening. US Treasuries ended a volatile week modestly lower, underperforming Eurozone bonds and UK gilts following a higher-than-expected US CPI data, as Fed Chair Powell reiterated that there is no urgency to cut rates. US equities rose, with the Russell 2000 lagging both the Nasdaq and S&P 500. The Euro Stoxx 50 index posted strong gains, bolstered by better-than-expected Q4 earnings, while the German DAX reached an all-time high. Japan's Nikkei 225 performed well amid a weaker yen. Other Asian markets were mixed, with the Hang Seng leading the region amid optimism about the Al/tech sectors, followed by Korea's Kospi, and the Shanghai Composite also extended its rallies. However, India's Sensex index fell. In commodities, gold and copper were on track to close higher, while oil finished a choppy week with moderate gains.

Selected asset performance



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Equity Indices	Close	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	YTD Change (%)	52-week High	52-week Low	Fwd P/E (X)
World	0.000	(73)	(70)	(70)	(70)	(70)	<u>g</u>	2011	
MSCI AC World Index (USD)	882	1.5	5.7	3.7	18.4	4.9	883	738	20.6
North America									
US Dow Jones Industrial Average	44,711	0.9	5.2	2.2	16.4	5.1	45,074	37,612	21.2
US S&P 500 Index	6,115	1.5	4.7	2.8	22.3	4.0	6,128	4,946	25.0
US NASDAQ Composite Index	19,946	2.2	4.7	4.4	25.8	3.3	20,205	15,223	35.6
Canada S&P/TSX Composite Index	25,699	1.0	4.5	2.6	23.0	3.9	25,876	20,665	17.1
Europe									
MSCI AC Europe (USD)	583	2.9	10.5	8.1	11.0	10.2	595	519	15.3
Euro STOXX 50 Index	5,501	3.3	10.4	13.8	16.8	12.3	5,502	4,474	16.1
UK FTSE 100 Index	8,765	0.7	6.9	8.6	15.8	7.2	8,821	7,512	12.8
Germany DAX Index*	22,612	3.8	11.5	17.4	33.4	13.6	22,625	16,857	16.8
France CAC-40 Index	8,164	2.4	10.0	11.7	6.3	10.6	8,259	7,030	16.3
Spain IBEX 35 Index	12,936	1.9	10.1	12.3	30.5	11.6	12,975	9,842	12.1
Italy FTSE MIB Index	37,908	2.3	7.9	10.3	21.0	10.9	37,908	30,653	10.8
Asia Pacific									
MSCI AC Asia Pacific ex Japan (USD)	587	0.6	5.3	2.1	14.6	3.0	632	506	15.2
Japan Nikkei-225 Stock Average	39,149	0.9	1.8	1.6	3.8	-1.9	42,427	31,156	19.8
Australian Stock Exchange 200	8,556	0.5	3.9	4.0	13.4	4.9	8,575	7,489	19.3
Hong Kong Hang Seng Index	22,394	6.0	16.5	15.2	41.0	11.6	23,242	15,456	10.4
Shanghai Stock Exchange Composite Index	3,344	1.2	3.2	-1.1	16.7	-0.2	3,674	2,690	13.6
Hang Seng China Enterprises Index	8,234	5.8	17.8	18.1	52.9	12.9	8,373	5,208	9.8
Taiwan TAIEX Index	23,153	-1.4	1.6	1.9	27.9	0.5	24,417	18,551	19.0
Korea KOSPI Index	2,591	2.7	3.7	7.1	-1.1	8.0	2,896	2,360	11.4
India SENSEX 30 Index	75,558	-3.0	-1.2	-2.6	5.2	-3.3	85,978	70,234	20.1
Indonesia Jakarta Stock Price Index	6,623	-1.8	-4.8	-8.2	-8.1	-6.5	7,911	6,500	12.0
Malaysia Kuala Lumpur Composite Index	1,591	0.0	0.9	-0.6	4.0	-3.1	1,685	1,519	15.3
Philippines Stock Exchange PSE Index	6,061	-1.5	-3.8	-7.6	-11.6	-7.2	7,605	5,863	10.5
Singapore FTSE Straits Times Index	3,876	0.4	2.3	3.7	23.5	2.3	3,921	3,092	12.1
Thailand SET Index	1,282	0.0	-4.4	-11.6	-7.5	-8.5	1,507	1,252	15.1
Latam									
Argentina Merval Index	2,353,744	-2.6	-13.9	12.7	112.9	-7.1	2,867,775	955,099	9.2
Brazil Bovespa Index*	124,850	0.2	4.7	-2.3	-1.7	3.8	137,469	118,223	8.4
Chile IPSA Index	7,328	0.6	7.4	13.1	20.5	9.2	7,328	6,024	11.8
Colombia COLCAP Index	1,536	1.3	9.8	13.9	24.1	11.3	1,546	1,215	6.0
Mexico S&P/BMV IPC Index	54,160	2.5	8.7	7.1	-5.4	9.4	58,299	48,770	13.2
EEMEA									
Saudi Arabia Tadawul Index	12,385	-0.4	1.7	5.0	-0.4	2.9	12,883	11,318	N/A
South Africa JSE Index	87,841	0.4	7.0	4.8	20.3	4.5	88,644	71,663	13.3
Turkey ISE 100 Index*	9,915	-0.4	2.0	5.2	9.3	0.9	11,252	8,567	7.0

*Indices expressed as total returns. All others are price returns.

Equity Indices - Total Return	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	YTD Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	3-year Change (%)	5-year Change (%)
Global equities	1.5	5.8	3.9	5.0	20.2	31.0	65.0
US equities	1.5	4.8	3.3	4.3	23.8	43.1	91.3
Europe equities	3.0	10.6	8.3	10.3	14.0	18.2	36.6
Asia Pacific ex Japan equities	0.6	5.4	2.4	3.1	17.4	3.0	18.9
Japan equities	-0.1	6.2	4.3	1.8	6.6	15.2	30.5
Latam equities	1.0	10.0	1.0	12.2	-13.0	7.5	-1.0
Emerging Markets equities	0.5	5.8	3.0	3.7	14.1	-1.3	13.6

All total returns quoted in USD terms and subject to one-day lag. Data sourced from MSCI AC World Total Return Index, MSCI USA Total Return Index, MSCI AC Europe Total Return Index, MSCI AC Asia Pacific ex Japan Total Return Index, MSCI Japan Total Return Index, MSCI Emerging Latin America Total Return Index, and MSCI Emerging Markets Total Return Index

Total return includes income from dividends and interest as well as appreciation or depreciation in the price of an asset over the given period.

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Bond indices - Total Return	Close	1-week Change (%)	1-month Change (%)	3-month Change (%)	1-year Change (%)	YTD Change (%)
BarCap GlobalAgg (Hedged in USD)	584	-0.1	1.6	1.1	5.3	0.6
JPM EMBI Global	910.7	-0.2	2.3	1.1	9.3	1.5
BarCap US Corporate Index (USD)	3320.5	0.0	2.2	0.7	5.1	0.9
BarCap Euro Corporate Index (Eur)	259.9	0.0	1.7	1.1	6.3	0.7
BarCap Global High Yield (Hedged in USD)	636.6	0.0	1.6	2.0	12.3	1.5
Markit iBoxx Asia ex-Japan Bond Index (USD)	227.1	0.1	1.4	0.9	6.6	0.9
Markit iBoxx Asia ex-Japan High-Yield Bond Index (USD)	264	0.5	1.2	0.7	11.8	1.2

Total return includes income from dividends and interest as well as appreciation or depreciation in the price of an asset over the given period.

		1-week	1-month	·	·		52-week	52-week	1-week Change (%)
Currencies (vs USD)	Latest	Ago	Ago	3-months Ago	1-year Ago	Year End 2023	52-week High	52-week Low	
Developed markets									
EUR/USD	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.05	1.07	1.04	1.12	1.01	1.3
GBP/USD	1.26	1.24	1.22	1.27	1.26	1.25	1.34	1.21	1.3
CHF/USD	1.11	1.10	1.10	1.12	1.13	1.10	1.19	1.08	0.7
CAD	1.42	1.43	1.43	1.41	1.35	1.44	1.48	1.34	0.8
JPY	153	151	158	156	151	157	162	140	-0.7
AUD/USD	0.63	0.63	0.62	0.65	0.65	0.62	0.69	0.61	0.8
NZD/USD	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.59	0.61	0.56	0.64	0.55	0.5
Asia									
HKD	7.78	7.79	7.79	7.78	7.82	7.77	7.84	7.76	0.1
CNY	7.28	7.29	7.33	7.23	7.19	7.30	7.33	7.01	0.2
INR	86.9	87.4	86.6	84.4	83.0	85.6	88.0	82.6	0.6
MYR	4.44	4.44	4.51	4.49	4.79	4.47	4.81	4.09	0.0
KRW	1443	1449	1461	1402	1335	1472	1487	1303	0.4
TWD	32.8	32.8	33.0	32.6	31.4	32.8	33.2	31.3	-0.2
Latam									
BRL	5.77	5.81	6.05	5.80	4.97	6.18	6.32	4.92	0.7
COP	4139	4122	4295	4486	3918	4406	4566	3738	-0.4
MXN	20.4	20.6	20.5	20.4	17.1	20.8	21.3	16.3	0.7
ARS	1057	1053	1040	1000	834	1031	1057	835	-0.3
EEMEA									
RUB	89.2	97.0	103.2	98.9	91.6	113.5	115.1	82.7	8.1
ZAR	18.5	18.4	18.9	18.3	19.0	18.8	19.4	17.0	-0.3
TRY	36.2	36.0	35.5	34.3	30.8	35.4	36.2	30.4	-0.6

		1-week	1-month	3-months	1-year	Year End	1-week basis point
Bonds	Close	Ago	Ago	Ago	Ago	2023	change*
US Treasury yields (%)							
3-Month	4.31	4.33	4.30	4.52	5.38	4.31	-2
2-Year	4.30	4.29	4.37	4.34	4.58	4.24	1
5-Year	4.39	4.35	4.60	4.32	4.24	4.38	4
10-Year	4.53	4.49	4.79	4.44	4.26	4.57	4
30-Year	4.73	4.69	4.97	4.59	4.43	4.78	4
10-year bond yields (%)							
Japan	1.35	1.30	1.24	1.06	0.75	1.09	5
UK	4.49	4.48	4.89	4.48	4.04	4.56	1
Germany	2.42	2.37	2.65	2.34	2.34	2.36	5
France	3.15	3.09	3.47	3.08	2.83	3.19	6
Italy	3.49	3.47	3.84	3.54	3.85	3.52	3
Spain	3.03	3.00	3.33	3.05	3.26	3.06	3
China	1.65	1.61	1.64	2.08	2.44	1.68	4
Australia	4.42	4.36	4.61	4.70	4.26	4.36	6
Canada	3.12	3.08	3.54	3.28	3.56	3.23	4

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

	5	1-week Change	1-month Change	3-month Change	1-year Change	YTD Change	52-week	52-week
Commodities		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	High	Low
Gold	2,935	2.6	9.6	14.4	47.3	11.8	2,943	1,984
Brent Oil	75.2	0.7	-4.7	4.7	-1.6	1.2	84	68
WTI Crude Oil	71.3	0.5	-6.6	4.9	-0.7	0.1	79	64
R/J CRB Futures Index	313.2	1.8	1.9	11.6	15.9	5.6	313	265
LME Copper	9,485	0.8	3.6	5.5	15.7	8.2	11,105	8,189

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